

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A surgical needle, which comprises:
  - an elongated needle body defining a longitudinal y axis and x and z axes transverse to the y axis, the elongated needle body including a central shaft and having a first end for attachment to a suture and a second needled end for penetrating tissue, the needled end including lower and upper opposed surfaces and a pair of side surfaces extending between the lower and upper surfaces and contiguous therewith, the upper surface and side surfaces extending to a pointed tip, the lower surface extending to a cutting edge defined at the intersection of the side surfaces and proximal of the pointed tip, the cutting edge extending in oblique relation relative to the longitudinal axis of the needle body and terminating at the pointed tip.
2. The surgical needle according to claim 1 wherein the upper and lower surfaces are substantially planar.
- 15 3. The surgical needle according to claim 2 wherein the needle end defines a first transverse cross-sectional dimension adjacent the central shaft, the first cross-sectional dimension defining a general trapezoidal configuration.
4. The surgical needle according to claim 3 wherein the needle end defines a second transverse cross-sectional dimension adjacent the pointed tip, the second transverse cross-sectional dimension defining a general triangular configuration.

5. The surgical needle according to claim 4 wherein the first cross-sectional dimension defines a dimension along the z-axes corresponding to a first width of the needle end, the first width at least equal to a corresponding shaft width of the central shaft.

5 6. The surgical needle according to claim 5 wherein the first width is greater than a corresponding shaft width of the central shaft.

7. The surgical needle according to claim 6 wherein the first width is not less than about 1.5 times the shaft width.

10 8. The surgical needle according to claim 6 wherein the first cross-sectional dimension defines a dimension along the x-axis corresponding to a first height of the needle end, the first height being less than a corresponding shaft height of the central shaft.

15 9. The surgical needle according to claim 8 wherein the first height is not greater than about 0.5 times the shaft height.

10. The surgical needle according to claim 1 wherein the needle body is curved along the longitudinal axis.

20 11. The surgical needle according to claim 10 wherein the elongated needle shaft defines an angle of curvature ranging from about 80° to about 180°.

12. The surgical needle according to claim 1 wherein the linear cutting edge intersects the upper planar surface at an angle ranging from about 15° to about 30° relative to the longitudinal axis.